

clinical specialties such as oncology and cardiology have an influence in the development of appropriateness criteria, practice standards, and PFP criteria. The commission has been working to increase our contacts with appropriate specialty societies to develop joint standards that are more likely to be generally accepted. Although SNM is the major society representing nuclear medicine and molecular imaging, it is dwarfed by the membership and resources of groups like the ACR and the American College of Cardiology, and we need to work together wherever possible to further our goals.

Another area that significantly affects nuclear medicine is Medicare reimbursement. New CMS regulations, bundling radiopharmaceuticals into the cost of procedures, have significant adverse effects on reimbursement. The SNM Coding and Reimbursement Committee and Ambulatory Payment Classification Task Force worked actively in 2008 to ensure that the cost of radiopharmaceuticals is accurately recorded so that proper reimbursement is made.

The Quality Assurance Committee, whose major role has been the development of phantoms for the Veterans Affairs

quality assurance program, continues to do an excellent job. Last year a thyroid phantom was developed and distributed. This year a cardiac perfusion SPECT phantom will be distributed. A new role for the committee this year is the development of a PET phantom for use by the SNM Clinical Trials Network to ensure reproducibility between different sites.

As we enter the new year, with a new administration in Washington, DC, and in the midst of a financial crisis, it is important that SNM continue its work representing nuclear medicine and molecular imaging. Change is inevitable, and we must maintain our position as a credible advocate to have an influence in the process. The SNM Commission on Health Care Practice and the committees under it are doing an excellent job of meeting these challenges.

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From the SNM Commission on Education

The Commission on Education was formed in June 2008 in an effort to streamline the governance process for SNM. The commission now includes 5 parts: (1) the Commission on Education itself, which has charges similar to those of the previous Committee on Education; (2) the Scientific Program Committee; (3) the Continuing Education Committee; (4) the Publications Committee; and (5) the Young Professionals Committee (YPC).

Commission on Education: The first year of the 2008–2010 Education Strategic Plan was quite successful. The commission completed almost all of its Year 1 action items and began planning and developing Year 2 action items. The focus during the past year was on 4 key areas: (1) continuing to develop education activities targeted to assist physicians in meeting maintenance of certification (MOC) requirements; (2) developing policies and procedures to meet the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) Revised Criteria; (3) expanding education activities in the area of CT; (4) planning next steps in reaching the SNM's Entry-Level Technologist initiative; and (5) establishing the Nuclear Medicine Advanced Associate (NMAA) position.

The SNM Learning Center (<http://interactive.snm.org/index.cfm?PageID=939>) houses all online education activities. It also includes information available on DVDs and CDs, as well as information on all live workshops and symposia. SNM's premier education activity, the Lifelong Learning and Self-Assessment Program (LLSAP), can be found in the Learning Center. Because MOC continues to

be a primary focus for SNM, new modules continue to be developed, offering state-of-the-art education to members seeking self-assessment module (SAM) credits to fulfill MOC Part II requirements or to earn continuing education credits using our virtual tool.

In addition to LLSAP, the Learning Center offers interactive cases in diagnostic CT and PET/CT. These cases provide Digital Imaging and Communications in Medicine-compliant datasets so that participants can experience education in a virtual setting. These cases were developed to assist physicians in meeting the 500-CT or 150-PET/CT case recommendations published by both SNM and the American College of Radiology (ACR) in 2005. Live CT Case Review Workshops have been added to the slate of education offerings to provide other venues for meeting the CT case reading recommendation. Two of the live CT Case Review Workshops are available via the SNM Online Lectures.

SNM now offers more than 100 online lectures on a wide range of topics. Lectures and lecture series are available



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in PET and PET/CT, CT, nuclear cardiology, molecular imaging, brain imaging, and basic science.

The SNMTS has been moving forward on 2 major education initiatives: (1) meeting the SNMTS recommendation of a baccalaureate degree for entry-level nuclear medicine technologists; and (2) establishing an advanced nuclear medicine technologist position. The Educators' Committee Curriculum Task Force completed the fourth edition of the *Nuclear Medicine Technologist Curriculum Guide* in 2008 as a starting point for following through on the nuclear medicine technologist entry-level recommendation. The first edition of the *Nuclear Medicine Advanced Associate Curriculum Guide* was also completed in 2008. The NMAA position has been recognized by the SNM, ACR, Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in Nuclear Medicine Technology, Nuclear Medicine Technology Certification Board, American Registry of Radiologic Technologists, and American Society of Radiologic Technologists. Efforts now focus on launching the first NMAA program in 2009 and obtaining recognition from the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education.

New live courses were introduced in 2008 for nuclear medicine technologists. Those seeking PET certification had the opportunity to participate in the first PET Review Course and Mock Exam, which focused specifically on materials needed to prepare for the actual exam. The first Nuclear Cardiology Technologist Review Course and Mock Exam were held at the 2008 SNM Annual Meeting. A second nuclear cardiology technologist course was held in September, and more courses for both PET and nuclear cardiology certification preparation will now be held annually.

Scientific Program Committee: The 2008 SNM Mid-Winter Education Symposium was the second to be held in conjunction with the American College of Nuclear Physicians (ACNP) Annual Meeting. The meeting was quite successful, with the highest attendance to date. The CT Case Review Workshop was held on Friday and Saturday and was recorded to develop an online version of the workshop. Presentation topics included Instrumentation and Radiopharmaceuticals for Molecular Imaging, Cardiovascular Nuclear Imaging, Gastrointestinal Update, and SPECT and PET Quantification. Technologist sessions focused on the business and science of nuclear medicine.

The 55th SNM Annual Meeting, held in New Orleans, LA, offered new features. A third basic science summary session in molecular imaging was introduced, as well as a new molecular imaging-related scientific track. More than 1,600 presentations and posters and more than 80 continuing education sessions were included. InfoSNM was continued, offering expanded topics. Live SAM credit sessions were held for the first time, with much success. More than 20 sessions were captured for the 2008 Annual Meeting Highlights Webcast, which went live in October.

Continuing Education Committee: This year has been very challenging for continuing education. With the ACCME Revised Criteria now guiding all activities, efforts have focused on involving all aspects of SNM in meeting the criteria and raising the bar on content and evaluation of education activities. In addition, the outside focus on commercial support and conflicts of interest has created real challenges in planning and meeting budgets for this year's Mid-Winter Education Symposium and Annual Meeting.

Young Professionals Committee: The second year of the YPC Strategic Plan saw many of the goals and objectives completed or in progress. Most SNM committees, councils, and centers of excellence now have young professional members. The YPC has been active over the past year, offering the opportunity to exchange information, ask questions, and obtain updates on activities and issues relevant to all young professionals. Efforts to increase the number of scientist members continue to be at the top of the list for the committee.

The 55th SNM Annual Meeting offered the most YPC activities since the formation of the committee. In addition to the annual YPC Luncheon, which for the first time offered continuing education credit, the YPC hosted the 2nd Annual YPC Knowledge Bowl. The committee also organized 3 continuing education sessions: The Robert Lull Forum on leadership topics, which was cosponsored by the ACNP Residents Section; Basics of MRI, which was 1 of the SAM sessions; and a session on grantsmanship.

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Director of Education, SNM

From the SNM Committee on Continuing Education

Since its inception in 1954, SNM has offered continuing education (CE). At first, CE was almost entirely didactic lecture delivered by distinguished faculty to attendees at meetings. In the 1970s, some of these lectures began to be distributed to members more widely via reproduction of lectures slides and later by slide sets accompanied by audiotapes captured at these meetings. In

the 1980s, videotapes of CE lectures replaced slide sets. In 1998, SNM first began offering CE "enduring materials" from sessions at the annual SNM scientific meetings in digital format on CD-ROM. In 1999, SNM began offering CE credit to readers of specially designated CE articles in *The Journal of Nuclear Medicine (JNM)*.